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SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE  
S. C. REGISTRY

Special Branch

REPORT

Date May 6, 1938.

Subject... Correspondence appearing in the "North-China Daily News" over  
the signature "Fr. Reiber."

Made by D.S. Pitts.

Forwarded by

C. Crawford D.S.

Fritz REIBER, German, is an old China hand, having been in this part of the world for the last thirty years. He is very well known in international circles locally for his charitable disposition and willingness to cooperate in philanthropic works. He is the President of the German Garden Club and is the owner of an import and export firm bearing his name. This company, which is located at Arnhold Building, 320 Szechuen Road, has been established for some fifty years and deals exclusively in the feather business. It was established by his father and at present the import and export departments are conducted by his two sons-in-law.

Although not a member of the Nazi group he is looked upon very favourably by the German authorities here, who believe that in connection with the recent correspondence which appeared in the North China Daily News over his name, the anschluss between Germany and Austria had the effect of temporarily "making him lose himself" in his exuberance.

His local address is 55 Amherst Avenue.

*D. S. Pitts*  
L. S.

D.C. (Special Branch).



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## HERR REIBER'S LETTER

An early period is being put to the correspondence arising out of the remarkable outburst by Herr Fr. Reiber in these columns last Sunday morning. Some criticism has been made of the policy which permitted the letter to be published, but it is necessary that the correspondence columns of such a journal as this should be maintained as an open forum, and that contributors to it should be allowed as free expression of their opinions as possible. But debate on such subjects as those raised by Herr Reiber is likely to develop into an ill-mannered wrangle, not only because of the arrogant tone of the original communication, but because of the unfortunate memories it must recall. It is not to be believed that the generality of Germans hold quite the same views as therein set out, or that many of them would endorse the manner in which they are expressed, but it is just as well that people of other nationalities should realize the opinions held by at least a section of the Germanic peoples. Were such opinions held by the majority of the Germans then the leopard would not have changed his spots nor the Ethiopian his skin. The letter is redolent of that type of public utterance which marked the pre-war years when Prussianism was rampant. Herr Reiber claims that treaties made under duress "carry no more moral obligation than a cheque signed in the middle of the night with a burglar holding a pistol at the drawer's temple." All very nice and pretty, but what are the facts? Germany having invaded and laid waste Belgium and a large portion of north-eastern France, was, after a very long struggle, defeated. Faced with the possibility of the war being carried into German territory, with all the hideous suffering which had been inflicted upon Belgium and France, the German rulers decided to sue for peace. There was no pistol at their head. They had failed in the greatest war the world had ever known, and, by their surrender, avoided much of the same suffering as they had wreaked on others. There was then no question of a pistol having been held at Germany's head, and a treaty extracted, but a contract for peace in which Germany received the valuable consideration of not having her territory violated.

That that peace treaty was a bad one, very few people nowadays will deny. Indeed probably an overwhelming proportion of world opinion is in favour of its being modified. That opinion is being restrained from freer expression by the conduct of Germany and its rulers, for if the habit of tearing up unpleasant treaties at will is to be continued, what can be the use of endeavouring to secure a final settlement, which in its turn would have to be embodied in some or other documentary form? Herr Reiber must realize that, if treaties are to have no more permanence about them than the passing goodwill of one or other of the parties thereto, it will be impossible to bring about that confidence and sense of security on which alone the peace of the world can be preserved. Herr Reiber sheds facile tears over the Middle European nations "bled white and starved into submission" being ordered to sign on the dotted line. It was, of course, very wrong for the Allies to have used the warlike instrument of the blockade, and the manner in which Germany refrained from attempting to effect a successful submarine siege of the British Isles is clear proof of the gentleness with which she prosecuted the Great War. But, sarcasm apart, it should be realized that much is done in times of war of which there may be disapproval in times

of peace. There is an opportunity given by Herr Reiber to pose a *tu quoque* to everyone of the complaints he makes. It is not necessary to do so; the one real fact is that Germany gambled in 1914 for high stakes and lost. There is the uncomfortable knowledge that preparations are being made against the possibility of such an event occurring again. The pre-war slogans are coming again to the fore: there is talk of wanting that place in the sun which Germany lost, in the words of one of her own statesmen, by her own stupidity. Much opinion outside Germany holds that more than a little of Germany's aspirations should be met, but that is discounted by the failure to perceive any limits which Germany may set to her own appetite, which appears to grow with eating.

For example in Great Britain there is a large and influential section of public opinion which not only desires the general appeasement of Europe but for that matter the whole world. It leans very strongly towards a more positive friendship with Germany, believing that the two nations should never have been enemies. How can that opinion be translated into deeds when utterances such as that of Herr Reiber, and others, who apparently think like him, find wide publication? The adoption of the attitude of the *enfant terrible* may be very picturesque and within limits obtain certain results, but what contribution does it make towards that peace which even Herr Hitler so earnestly states he desires? The answer is obvious; none. On the other hand it leads to a perpetuation of just those conditions which keep the world in a state of tremulous suspense and insecurity. The transformation of Europe into an armed camp, the fear that on the whim of one ruler or another it may be plunged into a war more hideous than that from which the world has not yet recovered, and the manifest threat to European civilization has not yet been stopped by the realization that war does not pay. The victors of the Great War realize that fact only too bitterly. It has long been time for the people of the world, even including such men as Herr Reiber, to turn their faces from the past, and resolutely look out for the future, a future of peace and construction, not one of death, terror and devastation. And that for a very good reason. Would Herr Reiber care again to see those conditions in his own country from which Herr Hitler and his party rescued it? That is the danger which is ever present in the unsettled state of Europe. Bolshevism may have been driven underground in Germany, but it would be unwise to believe that it has been scotched once and for all, and in the event of Europe being plunged into a tragic war, what is to prevent it from again raising its ugly head? These are questions which men of good faith, no matter of what nationality must look squarely in the face. The time has come for a greater display of goodwill than has been apparent since the end of the Great War. There is much eagerly waiting to be brought into operation, but the policies which Herr Reiber so enthusiastically endorses, merely tend to push it further and further into the background. The friends of Germany in Great Britain find themselves embarrassed by utterances similar to those contained in the correspondent's letter; such things stimulate the strong opposition which is being offered to Mr. Neville Chamberlain's policy of appeasement, and negatives much of the good work that is being done by a section of the British Press to bring about a better understanding with Germany.

S/ 14/14

## Today's Plebiscite A German Reader's Views

To the Editor of the

"NORTH-CHINA DAILY NEWS"

SIR,—This being the day when the German and Austrian residents in China are called on to vote whether or not their countries shall be reunited, I take the opportunity to congratulate the English Press on the sensible view they have lately taken in this matter. Whereas until quite lately the British journalists emphasized the sanctity of all treaties, and roundly denounced the violation of any of them, they now seem to admit, at least tacitly, that treaties signed under duress carry with them no more moral obligation than a cheque signed in the middle of the night with a burglar holding a pistol at the drawer's temple.

No document embodying rules and regulations which thereafter shall govern the conduct of the contracting parties, is worthy of respect and need be faithfully fulfilled, unless both parties to the contract concluded it of their own free will, and unless its conditions and stipulations are reciprocal. Those that were forced upon the vanquished by the victor at the point of the sword, can and should be broken as soon as the party which had to submit to the victor's dictation at the time, is once more strong enough to do so.

There has been lately a lot of loose talk about dictators who are blamed for all the evils from which humanity suffers at present. I quite agree, but with the qualifying reservation that the dictators which I consider responsible, are the puny autocratic Allied statesmen who held Europe's fate in their hands at the end of the world war; who in their victory-drunk, vindictive state of mind arbitrarily tore Middle Europe into so many pieces without the least regard for ethnological or linguistic boundaries—distinguishing features of which they appear to have had only very rudimentary knowledge—and then patched these shreds together again as their fancy led them, into kind of a crazy quilt. How anybody with only a teaspoonful of brains could ever have imagined that such an outrageous violation of the Middle European peoples' political rights and racial homogeneity could be sustained for any length of time, passes all understanding now that the world is in a soberer mood.

But whether they liked it or not, those Middle European nations, bled to the white and starved into submission, were ordered to sign on the dotted line the treaties which the Allied dictators held ready for them; those treaties about the "sanctity" of which, and the violation of such sanctity there has been so much indignant raving in the press. However, that the many wrongs committed and the senseless outrages perpetrated by the Allied despots, who together with their subservient satellites (the whole bunch being collectively known as the League of Nations) held the world's fate in their hands at the end of the world war, would sooner or later have to be put right again, was obvious. Hitler is doing it now.

One of the Allies' most helpless "war babies" was Austria in its post-war mutilated state. Chiselled down by the Allied Great Moguls till only a miserable rump remained, it was plain to all that this derelict, the remnants of a once great and mighty

nation, was condemned to die a lingering death unless receiving some support, and such support has now materialized: Mother Germania has now taken the little waif, which was always one of her family, to her bosom and will see to it that no more harm shall be done to it by arrogant despots, on the plea that some crazy treaty entitles them to such privilege.

Some strong men tear up packs of playing cards; others rend telephone books asunder. Hitler tears up treaties; treaties of the kind that should have been torn to pieces and the bits relegated to the furnace, long ago. "More power to his elbow" say we.

Unfortunately in doing so, hardships cannot always be entirely avoided. Where wood is hewn chips will fly. But surely no such hardships will be inflicted on anybody as the German citizens of China were subjected to in the spring of 1919, when all men, women, children and babes-in-arms were roped in from all over China and penned up in a Concentration camp in Nantao, with Chinese soldiers standing guard over them until the necessary ships had been brought here, when they were all led along the Bund in a disgraceful procession to Hongkew, put into the cargo holds of four English steamers like cattle, and deported. Except a few dollars pocket money and a limited quantity of personal effects they had to leave everything behind, and these possessions were then "appropriated" by the Custodian of Enemy Property.

Incidentally, this writer cheerfully perjured himself at the time by making a solemn declaration that he possessed nothing more than what he stood up in. Ask me no questions and I will tell you no lies!

A new catchword has been going the rounds through the papers lately: certain nations have been branded as "Aggressor Nations", a term which embodies one of those half-truths that are worse than lies. To impart some sense to this expression it should only be used in juxtaposition to its counterpart: "Oppressor Nations," the latter category being the four nations which between them allocated three-quarters of the earth's surface to themselves, and now blithely expect all other countries to submit meekly to being perpetually bottled up in small areas hardly large enough to move around in. If the discontent with, the revolt against such intolerable conditions, the resistance against this unhealthy state of affairs deserves to be termed aggression; if a great and proud nation like Germany in refusing to perpetuate such conditions which condemn its people to everlasting serfdom, thereby commits an act of aggression, then by all means call us an "Aggressor Nation"—with the above qualifying reservations we plead guilty to the charge.

In a recent leader you expressed an opinion that dictators can only remain in power as long as they can show up successes, an argument to which little exception can be taken, except that it applies to all rulers, governments and even businessmen: it is success, or the absence of it, that makes or breaks them. However,

with so many wrongs committed by the Allied dictators that must be righted, so many injustices perpetrated which have to be adjusted, there will be no dearth of great deeds for Hitler to accomplish for a long time to come, consequently there is no danger that he will have to resort to what you termed "desperate courses" to retain his hold on the German people.

There is a shrewd English proverb to the effect that "every dog has his day", which is very much to the point when trying to get the right perspective of present events. Germany has been ordered about, bullied, browbeaten and dictated to long enough while she was weak unto death after the war. If, now that Germany is strong again, Hitler does a little dictating of his own, it will be a useful change, and a salutary lesson for everybody.

FR. REIBER

Shanghai, Apr. 9.

\*\*\*If it is possible to agree with much of what Mr. Reiber has written, despite the vehemence which spoils the presentation of his case, surely much comfort will be felt by the non-aggressor nations in his quotation of the proverb that "Every dog has his day." It is a most comforting thought that days have a habit of coming to an end. There is another saying which might also be remembered and that is to the effect that he who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword.

## A German Outburst

### Reply to Herr Reiber

To the Editor of the

"NORTH-CHINA DAILY NEWS"

SIR,—In the last few months your journal has served as a convenient medium for airing the views of various factions in Asiatic and European disputes. We have had Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Czech and, finally, German—altogether an interesting display of passionate oratory. But what purpose have these outbursts served? They have been, in the main, so obviously biased, so intolerant of any other party, that, although they may have afforded the writers themselves some relief and pride, they can have produced no other effect than to strengthen the animosity of the other side.

Your contributor's eulogy of Germany's present policy is a case in point. In one respect, it was welcome. Individual Germans have recently been so reticent that one has wondered what they could possibly be thinking. When an expression of opinion was given, it generally reflected one of the better-known pages of "Mein Kampf" and could therefore not be taken as a completely genuine conviction of a free intellect. Now, however, we have an opportunity of gauging the state of mind of at least one of the German community; and, frankly, it would appear that it is a state of mind in which violence and a frequent resort to abuse are more in evidence than courtesy and calm reason. It is this attitude which will appeal least to Anglo-Saxon readers. For instance, see what "The Times" had to say concerning the Anschluss:

There would have been no protest if the attraction (of Austria to Germany) had developed naturally through growing confidence and mutual good-will. What is so deeply resented here—and throughout the civilized world—is that it was thought necessary to reverse the process by applying to it the physical force of a bully and by so doing arresting other hopeful developments towards a stable peace.

In the same spirit, by charging furiously through more than a column of your paper, Fr. Reiber has smashed down the very arguments which make the German case intelligible. Many English people would quite agree that Talleyrand's advice to Napoleon to spare a conquered foe was fatally ignored in 1919; that certain treaties must not last for ever; and that Germany is a great and cultured nation of which Austria might justifiably be called a part. But why cannot Fr. Reiber say so politely without vehemently bellowing and levelling such amazing accusations against people who are by now only too anxious to co-operate? And did Fr. Reiber pause to think whether France would have been justified in tearing up the treaty of 1871—had she been able to do so; whether Schuschnigg could have rightfully annulled the Berchtesgaden agreement; whether Germany would have been very merciful to France and

Britain if the result of the Great War had been different; whether Lloyd George and Clemenceau would not have been howled down as traitors, had they attempted, in the still smouldering frenzy of that awful struggle, to treat Germany as Fr. Reiber now thinks she should have been treated?

Might it not be better at the next political protagonist, to mark that soberer mood to which we are said to have returned, should either critically examine his own prejudices, or try to fathom the stupidity of the people he presumes to judge.

R. I. P.

Shanghai, Apr. 11.

480

## The Great Plebiscite

### Hert Reiber Explains

To the Editor of the

"NORTH-CHINA DAILY NEWS"

SIR,—In a footnote to my letter published in your Sunday's issue you saw fit to comment unfavourably on my unnecessary vehemence of expression, and your correspondent R.I.P. in his to-day's letter, playing the old game of "follow my leader," conveniently harps on the same string.

I would have much preferred if somebody had come forward to contest my arguments instead of attacking me personally. At any rate, please understand that in expressing myself somewhat forcibly and calling a spade a spade, I did not intend to be abusive. It was only because of the recently recurring habit of finding fault with everything Germany does, and where that is impossible with the way she does it; and knowing from past experience what an effect such incessant pounding finally has on the public mind, I thought fit to plead our case, to acquaint your readers with our point of view in the matter.

It would be a pity if in this community, where a population more cosmopolitan than anywhere else in the world tries to live harmoniously together, if only the journalists will let them, a spirit of mad animosity, from which we all suffered for more than four years during the world war, mainly as the result of incessant insidious propaganda, should once more poison the air. The recollection of those awful times still lingers too vividly in the minds of many of us for us to wish them to return.

If your correspondent R.I.P. sees fit to accuse Lloyd George and Clemenceau of moral cowardice by arguing that they had to be harsh to Germany to save their own skins, I will not contradict him. It only goes to show what a ghastly amount of evil a couple of men could do when their nerves failed them.

If the allied Press will only show a little more sympathetic understanding of Germany's endeavours to regain that place in the array of great nations to which she is entitled, there is no reason why the peoples of Europe should not once more live in neighbourly peace and harmony as

they did before the war. It would be a thousand pities if the persistent combined endeavours of certain nations to keep another one tightly bottled up, should result in the bottle bursting, when many inoffensive people would get hurt by flying splinters.

FR. REIBER

Shanghai, Apr. 12.

## A Nauseating Spectacle

To the Editor of the

"NORTH-CHINA DAILY NEWS"

SIR,—In your issue of April 10, Mr. REIBER has given your readers a valuable insight into the psychology of the average German of today.

As you say in your footnote, there is much to commend his logic superficially, but, faced as we are with the gravest problems of peace or war, existence or destruction of civilization, we are in duty bound to go a little deeper, to search for the root causes of this "German problem."

When Mr. REIBER says, that all the evils of today were created by the treaty of Versailles and its injustices, he forgets to ask himself, what was the cause of Versailles, what caused the Great War?

It may be unpalatable to Mr. REIBER to restate the bitter old truth, but the fact remains, that the German "leopard" has deeply disappointed humanity by failing to change his Prussian militarist spots.

Even before Hitlerian rearmament, Germany stopped paying reparations, but did that cause a French "Drang nach Osten"? No. But Germany would surely have done so, if she were in France's place. Everything that Hitler achieved, could have been obtained peacefully, perhaps a few years later, while the butter that went into guns could have fed nice babies and mothers, the monster of rearmament and the hell of war and air-bombing of women and children would not have been hanging over trembling humanity today.

Forgive me, Sir, for waxing sentimental, but in the pessimistic mood of today's sad events it seems that nothing less than the great heart of another Christ is needed to awaken humanity to the criminal horrors of the catastrophe that is being prepared for it at Berlin and Rome.

Mr. REIBER blames Versailles for not observing racial frontiers, but when has Hitler guaranteed to observe his own racial frontiers? A few years ago he refused to give France and Britain a guarantee of non-aggression against Eastern Europe. A few days ago Dr. Goebbels, or was it Goering, publicly declared that now is the time to redivide the world. Germany wants Ukraine and most of Eastern Europe and is willing to pay her accomplice, Italy, with French territories, etc.

But if Mr. REIBER will honestly admit, that "Might is right" and self-interest is above all else, will he please spare us the nauseating spectacle of a tiger shedding self-

pitiful tears and complaining against the nations who at Versailles tried to make him harmless in future, but should we say, too leniently to attain the object?

Even if Germany is crowded, is that justification for taking away other nations' liberty? Are not twenty million Germans in U.S.A. leading happy lives? Is it necessary to plant a German flag wherever German emigrants wish to lead a peaceful, useful life? The other day Dr. Goebbels said: "Now is the time to conquer the Empire and take the opportunity we missed in the past through our stupidity." He forgets, however, that it is criminally stupid to disregard the lessons of history, and persist in building by the sword empires which are sure to crumble sooner or later in a sea of blood. And to what useful end, except brutal lust of power?

May I conclude, Sir, with your own words?—"He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword."

ONE WHO STILL HOPES FOR  
THE SPECIAL ADVANCEMENT  
OF HUMANITY.

Shanghai, Apr. 11.

## Forgive and Forget

To the Editor of the

"NORTH-CHINA DAILY NEWS"

SIR,—The letter written by Mr. REIBER appearing in your issue of April 10, will not doubt react upon readers in varying ways. To me it did not make pleasant reading, and one could not but feel that a glorification of so-called "aggressor" nations at this stage and in this city was most untimely.

People of all nations generally agree that terrible mistakes were made by both sides during and after the Great War, but Germans were not the only people who suffered indignities and humiliations. Many of the Allies were similarly treated behind the German lines, and such happenings are the inevitable curse of war, as we see daily round us in Shanghai. One might add that even today political prisoners and Jews in Germany are not exactly lying on a bed of roses, and many are no more deserving of such treatment than were the Germans in Shanghai during the War. When human passions are out of control such tragedies are bound to occur.

Had the result of the Great War been reversed, what would have been the terms of the Peace Treaty that the Allies would have been forced to sign? Can anyone say with conviction that the Central European Powers would have been less victory-drunk and vindictive? All this stirring up of old hates after twenty years seems so futile and will get us nowhere other than on the road to another war. Have we not seen enough of Spain, Abyssinia, and Shanghai in 1932 and 1937?

That the recent history of Austria cannot be very gratifying to the Allies no one will deny, but at least out of the wreck she did preserve her independence and self-government, which is more than she has done since the German occupation.

By all means tear up treaties that were signed at the point of the pistol and when men were hot-headed; but during the last twenty years both sides have had time to cool and profit by their mistakes. Would it not be better now to try and forgive and forget and use our energy in conceiving a plan whereby one and all can live in peace and respect the needs of each other without recourse to war?

V. M. A.

Shanghai, Apr. 11.

## Herr Reiber's Outburst Repatriation Experiences

To the Editor of the  
"NORTH-CHINA DAILY NEWS"

SIR,—I am not quite clear what object MR. REIBER had when writing to you the letter which appeared in your issue of Sunday, April 10. As far as I am concerned, the result was simply very unfortunate. I can only presume that MR. REIBER's intention was to justify and support the union of Germany and Austria. If the Austrian nation really wishes to unite itself with the German, it has every right to do so and other nations have no right to interfere. If his letter had been worded a little more moderately, evidencing certain natural national patriotism and pride, but excluding recriminations, it would probably have evoked a certain amount of sympathy, even if not agreement, on the part of other nationals, including those who fought against Germany during the Great War. But, as far as I am concerned, the letter was entirely spoilt by its many actual and implied inaccuracies and inconsistencies.

I wonder what historians would say regarding the parental relationship, when describing Germany as the mother and Austria as the child. History would seem to indicate that the Austrian nation, as such, is a good deal older than the German.

His comments regarding agreements entered into, willingly and unwillingly, are very much to the point, bearing in mind the recent tea parties which are reported to have taken place between Herr Hitler and the ex-Austrian Chancellor, and the ultimatums which followed.

But what has nauseated me most is MR. REIBER's complaint regarding the bad treatment stated to have been received by the German community in China, when repatriated from Shanghai in 1919. Whatever discomfort there was very trivial in comparison to what took place in many other parts of the world during the tragic days of the Great War. Some Germans, whom I have met in recent years, have stated that, although the trip was not a luxurious one, they consider that it was made as comfortable as could be reasonably expected under the then circumstances. And those Germans were fortunate in comparison with many other repatriation parties, of one of which I had the misfortune to be a member. When the Great War broke out in 1914, I was living happily and peacefully in northern France, in that part which later came under German military occupation. Arrangements were eventually made between the German and French Governments for French women and children in those areas to be repatriated via Switzerland. On December 31, 1917, our journey started and the memory of that journey has been a horrible nightmare ever since. Herded in cattle trucks in the depth of snowy winter for five days and nights with my two little children, and only a small bundle of clothing, without a sou of money, and without sanitary arrangements of any sort. The train stopped at wayside stations twice each day, to enable us to obtain cold water and at each stop the

German population just spat and jeered at us. How glad we were to see the hospitable Swiss border and to enjoy the kinder treatment there received. The less MR. REIBER now says about his hardships the better, especially when many of us are trying to forget much worse discomfort than MR. REIBER ever experienced personally, if he was in China for most of the period of the war. The present is surely not a suitable time to stir up old hates more than necessary and although MR. REIBER may think that he is smart and clever, he may be interested to know that I consider his attempts at jocularity, regarding his own perjury, are entirely out of place.

JOSETTE SECONDE.

Shanghai, Apr. 11.